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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 OTTAWA 001123

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [CA](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: CANADA-U.S SECURITY RELATIONS - GETTING PAST IRAQ
TO PURSUE OUR COMMON INTERESTS

REF: (A) OTTAWA 892 (B) OTTAWA 1014

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Stephen R. Kelly,
Reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

SUMMARY

1. (C) With U.S.-Canada relations in flux and the role of the United Nations in question, Canadian foreign policy is at a crossroads. The postponement of the President's state visit to Ottawa, after Canada chose not to participate in Iraq and senior GoC officials criticized the U.S.-led effort, has been a harsh but necessary reality check for Canada. We will be on better footing after the February 2004 departure of Prime Minister Chretien, who prefers to work within international institutions even when they prove ineffective, and even when doing so damages our bilateral relationship. Canada will still be a strong proponent of multilateralism after Chretien's departure, but we expect his successor - probably ex-Finance Minister Paul Martin - to bring greater balance to Canadian foreign policy.

2. (C) SUMMARY CONT'D: In the meantime, we have a broad security agenda that must not languish while we wait for Chretien's replacement. From counterterrorist cooperation in North America to military deployments in Afghanistan to putting pressure on the North Korean and Iranian nuclear programs, we need Canada's help. We are also pushing Canada to go ahead with a decision to participate in missile defense. While doing so should be a no-brainer, given the security benefits for North America as a whole, it would represent a major leap for Canadian foreign policy. If Foreign Minister Graham and Defense Minister McCallum can convince Chretien to not pass the buck on this decision to his successor, then we need to work with the GoC to plug NORAD into missile defense command and control for North America. END SUMMARY.

3. (C) After the failure of its efforts to "bridge the divide" at the UN Security Council and its subsequent decision not to participate in the military campaign against Iraq (ref. A), Canada finds itself in a awkward position. Its "primordial" bilateral relationship with the U.S. is strained, as was graphically demonstrated by the postponement of President Bush's May 5 state visit to Ottawa. The GoC is rightly concerned about getting bilateral relations back on track, and is looking for ways to do so. At the same time, Canada remains committed to multilateral institutions such as the United Nations, and will continue to push for them to have a role in dealing with international crises.

CHRETIEN UNREPENTANT ON IRAQ

4. (C) In the wake of the coalition's sweeping military victory, public opinion in Canada has swung from majority opposition to the war to roughly an even split (ref. B). Prime Minister Chretien, however, has been unrepentant. He has maintained that Canada was right to not participate in Iraq without UN blessing, and has reiterated his concern about military actions aimed at regime change. A few Liberal Party MPs have publicly stated their opposition to Chretien's decision on Iraq, and press reports indicate that Deputy Prime Minister John Manley argued for Canadian participation within Cabinet. Meanwhile, the frontrunner to become the next Prime Minister when Chretien steps down in February 2004, ex-Finance Minister Paul Martin, has criticized anti-American rhetoric within the Liberal Party but also said that the Prime Minister made the right decision on Iraq. This position puts him squarely in the middle of the party that will continue to govern Canada for the foreseeable future.

A ROLE IN POST-CONFLICT IRAQ

5. (C) On post-conflict Iraq, the GoC wants to see as much UN involvement as possible but has been careful not to get into the same box as it did on military action. Manley has explicitly stated that Canada will not wait for UN approval to contribute to reconstruction efforts. Thus far Canada has

pledged US\$70 million for humanitarian assistance, and is looking at specific expertise it could offer. The RCMP, which has international experience in countries such as Bosnia and Haiti, has been mentioned as a possible source of assistance on the police front. The GoC wants to make a significant contribution in Iraq and to get back in our good graces. We need to work with them to find a useful role.

WAR ON TERRORISM, ARMS CONTROL

16. (C) Despite the rift over Iraq, we need to continue working closely with Canada on our national security agenda. We have much common ground in the war on terrorism and in arms control efforts. We have worked extremely closely with Canada in law enforcement, intelligence and military channels on preventing future terrorist attacks in North America. Given the massive flows of people and goods between our countries, such cooperation is essential. Canada has also stepped up to the plate internationally in the war on terrorism. Canada has been one of the biggest contributors to Operation Enduring Freedom, and will be supplying 1500 personnel to ISAF IV and V beginning in August.

17. (C) On the arms control front, Canada shares our strong concerns about the North Korean and Iranian nuclear programs, has denounced the DPRK's withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and has pushed for censure of Iran at the IAEA. Canada will continue to be a valuable ally in multilateral arms control fora, where it has considerable expertise and can serve as a bridge to other countries.

MISSILE DEFENSE

18. (C) The big question now for the bilateral security relationship is missile defense. Foreign Minister Graham and Defense Minister McCallum agreed in fall 2002 that Canada should participate in missile defense, and they are trying to gain Cabinet blessing to negotiate an agreement on participation with us. Graham and McCallum are trying to allay longstanding Canadian concerns that such a system would damage arms control efforts, particularly the weaponization of space.

19. (C) The deciding factor, as for all major GoC decisions, will be Chretien. He has indicated a willingness for Cabinet to consider the issue, and he usually does not do so unless he is favorably disposed. DFAIT and DND still expect missile defense to be taken up by Cabinet in the coming weeks, but do not yet have a clear sense of how the Prime Minister is leaning. We know there will be opposition from some of the more left-leaning members of Cabinet. Chretien can squash them if he chooses, and push this through. Or he can decide that he does not want missile defense participation to be part of his legacy, and put off consideration by Cabinet.

110. (C) Like on the issue of Iraqi reconstruction, we should engage Canada in a significant way if it chooses to participate in missile defense. In particular, we should find a way to plug NORAD into missile defense command and control for North America. This would be at the top of Canada's priority list for an agreement with us, as the GoC fears that NORAD will wither away if it is not involved in missile defense. We will need to show some flexibility on this issue, despite the recent assignment of missile defense regional oversight to NORTHCOM, in order to help our allies sell a missile defense agreement in Ottawa.

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